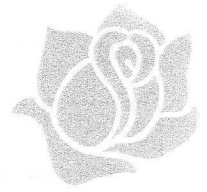


Roseville Legend



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The Buckeye Pressed Brick Co., Roseville, Ohio

By James L. Murphy

Although the **Buckeye Pressed Brick Company** was incorporated at Zanesville, Ohio, in 1893, the plant was actually located at Roseville (more specifically, at Ironspot, a little over a mile north of Roseville). Unlike the **Roseville Brick & Terra Cotta Co.**, which made Buckeye paving block, this "Buckeye" brick company is not known to have ever made paving brick, and since it specialized in face brick it is believed that none of its products were ever marked.

The 1895 **Sanborn** map shows a facility with ten round beehive kilns. A rare photograph found in a clay industry trade publication provides some idea of the size of these kilns.

The Roseville plant operated for about seven years, until 1901, when it was transferred to the **Ohio Press Brick Co.**, a branch of the **Hydraulic-Press Brick Co.** of St. Louis, for a price of \$150,000. At that time **H. J. Sheppard** was president of the Buckeye company and **A. J. Sheppard** was secretary. **Herbert J. Sheppard** was a Zanesville physician and surgeon, while his brother **Arthur J. Sheppard** was a Zanesville attorney. The **Hydraulic-Press Brick Co.** of St. Louis had a long history dating to the 1860s and by the time of the sale was a syndicate controlling 29 factories, including two others in Ohio, at Cleveland and Findlay. Interestingly, for some forty years the head of the St. Louis company was **Henry Ware Eliot**, whose father founded Washington University in St. Louis and whose son was the world-renowned poet **T. S. Eliot**.

In 1905 the new village of **Ironspot**, population 300, got its name and a new post office, at the urging of **Robert L. Queisser** of Zanesville and **Frank M. Ransbottom**. As the motivating force behind the **Ransbottom Brothers** pottery, **Frank Ransbottom** needs no introduction. At the time, Queisser was secretary and treasurer of the **Ohio Press Brick Co.**, **Willard R. Bell**, proprietor of the general store at that place and kiln foreman became the first postmaster. It was expected the population of Ironspot would double by the following spring. The name Ironspot was taken from the trade name of the product of

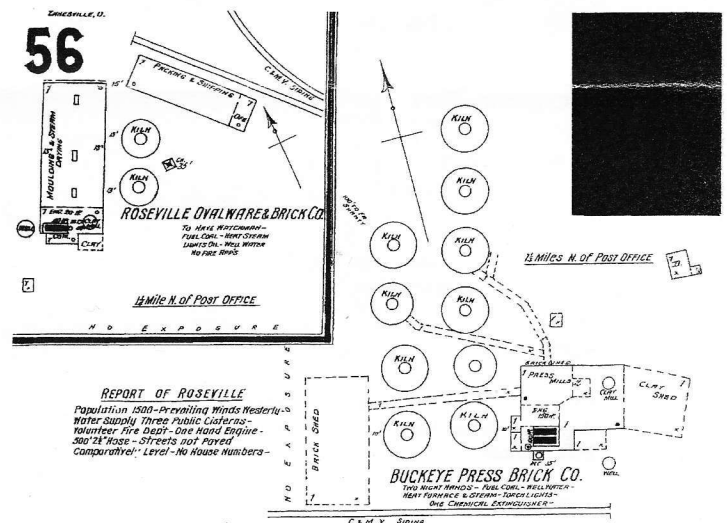
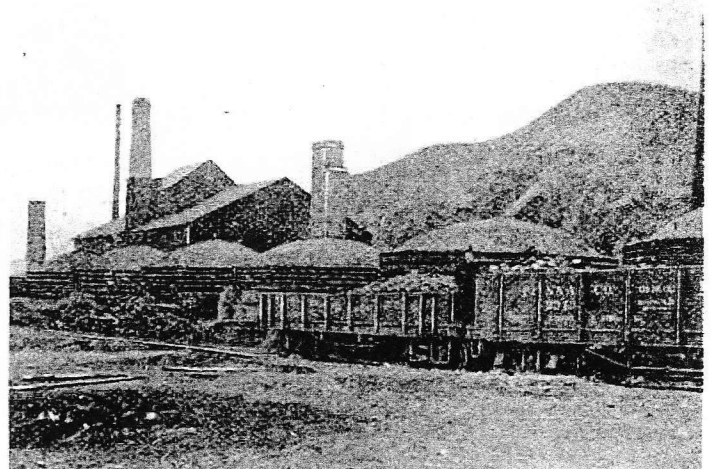


Photo top, Roseville Brick & Terra Cotta Co. Photo above, 1895 Sanborn Fire Insurance map of Buckeye Press Brick Co. shows a facility with ten round beehive kilns. [Photos courtesy of James L. Murphy.]

the **Ohio Press Brick Co.** plant, the face brick having an attractive speckled appearance due to impurities in the local clay.

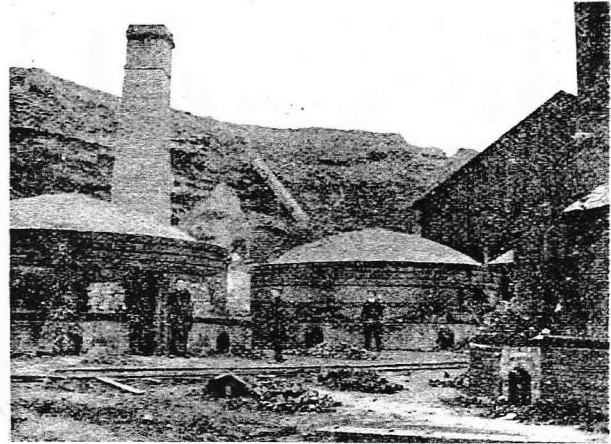
Although associated with the **Ohio Press Brick Co.** for only a relatively short time (he was appointed general manager and assistant treasurer in early 1902, at which time the offices were removed to Zanesville), **Robert L. Queisser's**

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The Buckeye Pressed Brick Co., (Cont. from Page 1)

life is of more than passing interest. Born in Indianapolis, the son of an Alsatian butcher, his early life was spent in railroad work, before he left railroading to manage the **Ohio Press Brick Co.** At one time he was president of the **Zanesville Chamber of Commerce.** Queisser left Zanesville after only five years for Cleveland, where he became sales manager for the **Cleveland Press Brick Co.** (another subsidiary of the St. Louis company). By 1911 he was a founding member of the **Hunt-Queisser-Bliss Co.,** specializing in brick and builders supplies and by 1920 this firm had become the **Queisser Co.,** with him as president and son **R.L. Queisser, Jr.,** as vice-president and manager. The father had served in the **5th Regiment of the Ohio National Guard,** as aide-de-camp on **Governor Judson Harmon's** staff for four years, and when his two sons were called to France during World War I Queisser, Sr. patented the design for what became the **Blue Star Service Flag** for families of service men and led to the organization of **Gold Star Mothers.**

As for the **Ohio Press Brick Co.,** the **Hydraulic-Press Brick Co.** of Cleveland made improvements at its Ironspot plant in 1915. This apparently included the addition of two kilns, as the 1918 **Sanborn Fire Insurance** map shows a total of twelve. In 1917 the offices were moved from Zanesville office back to Roseville. The plant was operating as late as 1932, when **J. Fred Brand,** superintendent reportedly invented a clay brick 70 percent lighter than ordinary brick, with the added benefit that it could be sawed and nailed. It is not known what became of Brand's patented brick, but by September, 1934, the **Hydraulic Press-Brick Co.** of St. Louis was in financial trouble, defaulting on interest and bonds that were coming due, blaming the problem on declining construction due to the Great Depression. It is not known precisely when production ceased at the Roseville plant, but by February, 1939, the company was also delinquent in paying county taxes, was selling coal rights to the property the following year, and in February 1941 demolition of the plant was being advertised, with "cleaned" brick offered at \$5 per thousand. Unlike the **Roseville Brick and Terra Cotta Co.,** little



OHIO CLAY WORKERS AT THE "BUCKEYE" PRESSED BRICK WORKS.

Photo top, another view of Roseville Brick & Terra Cotta Co. Photo above, Clay Workers visit the Buckeye Press Brick Co. works ca. 1895. [Photos courtesy of James L. Murphy.]

trace of the **Buckeye Press Brick Co.** can be seen today.

References

Vol. 33 no 6 (Sept 30 1908)

Lane Brick Works near Ellis Station has been sold by Mrs. Althea Lane, admr. to W.H. Shoemaker, Roseville, and it is understood it will be increased in capacity and new machinery and kilns erected.

Vol. 80 no 5 May 1932

J. Fred Brand, supt Hydraulic Press Brick Co. plant at Roseville has invented a clay brick 70 percent lighter than an ordinary unit and can be sawed and nailed.

Aug 28 1917. Ohio State paving brick plant idle since last fall to be started at once at full capacity. Capacity of 28,000 brick per day; 375,000 brick are needed for a mile of highway of ordinary width. Already has on hand, 1,300,000 bricks of which 500,000 will be used by OSU. Remainder to be used on New Lexington-Athens highway. William McClain Arehart of Roseville has been appted Supt. at \$3,000 annually.

William Arehart, formerly Supt. of large plant of Hydraulic-Press Brick Co. at Roseville is new Supt. of Stonecreek Brick Co. plant, which is half completed. To be in operation by Memorial Day, May 2 1922.